

Region gives town council an update

The search for water continues in Georgetown

The search for water to ensure future building in Georgetown continues this spring.

Andrew Hope, Halton Region's director of current planning, presented Halton Hills councillors Monday with an update on the region's search for a well that will supply water for future development in urban Georgetown.

However, the demand for water exceeds the supply.

While there's enough water in the system now to supply residential and industrial growth—equivalent to 321 single detached homes a year for the next five to six years—developers are clamoring to build more homes. Halton Region continues to defer all draft plans until another municipal well can be found, and any uncommitted water supply is now being reserved for industrial, commercial and institutional development.

"At this time there really is no reasonable expectation that we'll be able to produce another municipal well within three years," Hope told the councillors.

Currently the region's energies are focused on a well located on Sixth Line, near 15 Sideroad. In a November test, the well produced sufficient quantities of water (490 gallons/minute) to warrant a closer look. Hydrogeologists are now

attempting to find a sustainable yield and determine the impact on the aquifer recharge area. A public meeting will be held in mid-June.

The region has made a "generous" commitment to assist residents in the Sixth Line area who may be impacted by the testing, said Hope. If private wells, impacted by the November testing, have not returned to normal levels by May, the region will deepen the homeowners' wells to restore adequate water levels. If the

Sixth Line well goes into production, Halton Region will monitor the private wells within a zone of influence and provide funding to these residents to investigate any well interference.

Meanwhile, the region is keeping a close eye on well testing being conducted by developer Halton Hills Village Homes Inc. which has identified two potential well sites on their Main St. S. lands, Hope said. He noted the Ministry of Environment have issued HHVHI a water-taking permit, and the developer will be in the ground by the end of the month. Halton Region originally had targeted a well on Main St. at 15 Sideroad, but rejected it after

showing it impacted on an environmentally sensitive area in Hungry Hollow.

"It'll be interesting to find out the results of that pump test compared to our results we've had out at the Sixth Line test well," said Hope. "We may have some other options to pursue."

"We're working co-operatively with HHVHI to ensure the same science behind our pump tests is the same science applied to their pump tests."

When questioned further, Hope explained that if the HHVHI testing is successful then Halton Region may enter negotiations with the developer to bring it into the municipal well system.

"I just want to go on the public record...that roughly 20,000 residents of rural Halton rely on wells," said Ward 2 Councillor Bryan Lewis. "So we can't lose sight of the fact ... of the significance of the impact of any withdrawal of water from rural communities would have."

"We're not out to put a well in place that going to dry your well or your neighbour's well. We're doing things as properly as they could be done," said Halton Region hydrogeologist Steve Holysh who explained the testing steps.

—By Cynthia Gamble, staff writer

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